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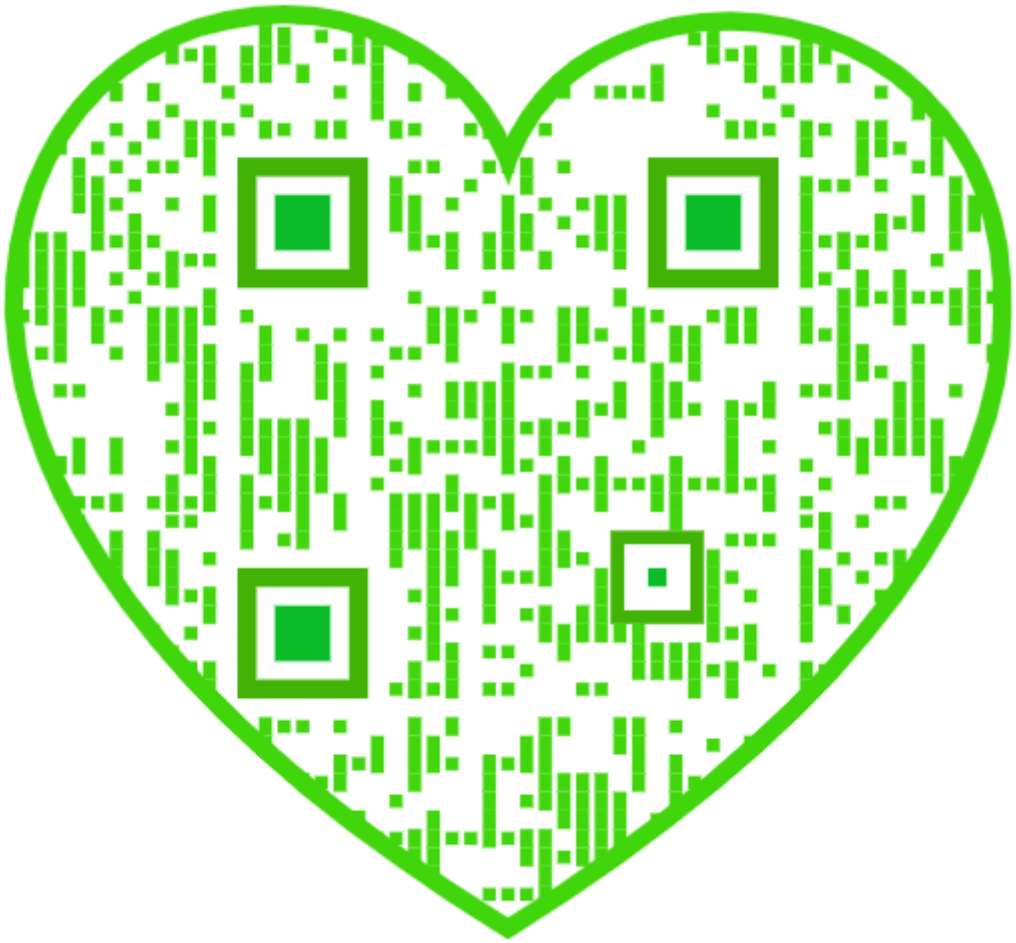

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BIBLE PRIMER

OLD TESTAMENT

FOR USE IN THE

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

OF

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Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself instituted holy baptism when He said,

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations,

Baptizing them

into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit;

Teaching them

to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." *Matt. 28: 18-20*

1. GOD MADE THE WORLD.

Who made the sun and the moon and the stars, the winds and the flowers, the bees and the birds? Who made you and all people in the world? Can you tell?

Once there was no earth and no people. Only the dear God was.

Then God made heaven and earth. But there was no order, no beautiful world as you see it to-day. Only great darkness over great waters!

In six days God made the world full of order, and beautiful.

First He made the light. Then, the second day, He lifted the mists and they became clouds. He made the blue sky over our heads. On the third day He put the waters in one place and dry land by itself. On the land He let grass, flowers, and herbs grow. Where was the sun? On the fourth day He made the sun, the moon, and the stars. Ah, and then the fifth day the waters brought forth fishes, and in the air birds and insects began to fly. Did He make animals on the land, too? He did, on the sixth day.

And yet how lonely the world was, for there were no people there! So the dear Lord made man. He made him like Himself, in His own likeness; and He called the first man Adam.

God saw all that He had made, and it was good, very good.

On the seventh day God rested from His work. And God blessed the seventh day. *Gen. 1.*

2. ADAM AND EVE IN PARADISE.

Where did Adam live?

In a lovely garden that God made for him, called Eden. Every tree that is pleasant to look at God put into Eden. A river watered the garden. Birds sang in the trees and in the air. There was gold there, and the onyx stone. Adam was gardener and caretaker. Yet no hard work tired him. Adam gave names to all the animals. From all the fruit trees he could eat. Oh, what happiness! for God Himself often came and talked to Adam. He was his friend and helper.

But Adam was alone in the garden. So God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a help." Then God put Adam into a deep sleep. And lo! when he awoke, there stood a woman that God had made. She became the wife of Adam. Would you like to know her name? She was called Eve. How happy were now Adam and Eve, friends of God, in the garden of Eden, that beautiful Paradise! They were like God, in His own image and likeness.

One day God said to Adam and Eve: "You may eat the fruit of all trees in the garden. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in the middle of the garden, you must not eat. If you do, you shall surely die." The good God wished to try Adam and Eve, to see if they would obey Him. *Gen. 2.*

3. THE FIRST SIN.

As long as Adam and Eve did not touch the forbidden tree they were happy.

One day Eve came to the tree. She looked at it long. The more she looked, the more pleased she was with the fruit. As she stood there she saw a serpent coiled around the tree. And the serpent said to Eve: "Has God really said that you may not eat of any tree in the garden?" Eve answered: "Of this tree God has said: 'You shall not eat of it. Or you must die.'" But the serpent said they would be like God, if they ate of it.

Eve looked at the tree again. She stretched forth her hand to the forbidden tree. She took the fruit, ate it, and gave to Adam. He ate, too.

The first sin was done.

Then Adam and Eve hid in the garden. They were afraid of God. And God called to Adam: "Where are you?" Adam said, "I was afraid, and I hid myself." And God said, "Did you eat of the forbidden fruit?" And Adam said that Eve gave the fruit to him. But Eve excused herself, saying that the serpent told her to take of the fruit.

What did God now do?

He drove Adam and Eve out of the garden. They were to have hard work. At last they were to die. An angel with a bright sword stood guard at the gate of the garden. Oh, unhappy Adam and Eve!

Did God leave them? No, He promised a Saviour, who would one day crush the serpent, that is, Satan. You know who this Saviour was to be. This promise Adam and Eve were to remember outside of the garden of Eden, after their first sin. *Gen. 3.*

4. THE KILLING OF ABEL.

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel.

They were so different! Abel loved and feared God. Cain did not. Abel was a quiet shepherd. Cain was a farmer. Both of them built altars of earth and stone and worshipped God. Cain gave to God fruit from his garden. Abel offered to God sheep from his flock. God did not love Cain's sacrifice. Do you know why? Cain's heart was not right with God. Abel's sacrifice pleased God. This made Cain angry. His eyes grew black and his face dark. One day when Abel and Cain were out in the field, all of a sudden Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Oh, what an awful sin!

The blood of Abel cried to heaven against wicked Cain. God said to Cain: "Where is your brother Abel?" Cain tried to excuse himself. He answered God: "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper? Can not my brother take care of himself?"

Then God told Cain that He knew very well that Cain had killed Abel. Because he had done so, he would have God against him. He would never be happy in this world. Then Cain left his home and his land forever. He went to a far off country and built a city.

Such was the death of the good Abel. He was the first martyr to the faith in the world.

Afterwards God gave Adam and Eve a son instead of Abel. They called him Seth, for he took Abel's place. Like Abel, Seth loved his God. *Gen. 4.*

5. THE DOVE AND THE OLIVE BRANCH.

After many hundreds of years had gone by, there were thousands of people on the earth. Most of them did not love God. The Lord was sorry He had made man. At last He said He would destroy all men, if they did not turn away from sin.

Was there no godly family in the world? Only one, Noah and his family. Noah had the good Seth as one of his forefathers.

One day God said to Noah: "Build yourself a large boat, an ark. Make it water-tight. I mean to send a flood on the earth." Noah made the ark. He took his family and many kinds of animals and went into it. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. That is, God wanted to save Noah.

The flood came, as God said. All God's words come true.

Forty days and nights it rained. All the earth was covered with water and the people drowned. Only Noah and his family were safe. They had listened to God's words. After a while the earth dried off. Then Noah sent out a dove. She came back with a fresh olive leaf in her mouth. What did that mean? That the waters were gone. Then Noah sent the dove out once more. She never came back.

And God told Noah and his wife and his three sons and their wives to go forth from the ark. And they did so.

They must have been happy that God had saved them from the flood. *Gen. 7, 8.*

6. NOAH'S OFFERING AND THE BOW OF PROMISE.

What did Noah do, when he came from the ark? The first thing he did was to build an altar. He offered some animals on it. See, how he and all his family kneel and pray to God! With all his heart Noah thanked the dear God for saving him, his wife and children, and the many animals God had told them to take into the ark, too.

It pleased God that Noah prayed to Him. So God blessed Noah and his family. He made them into a great people that filled the earth. He blessed the ground, also, that it should be fruitful.

Was that all God did?

No, He made a covenant with Noah. That means, He promised to be Noah's God, to help, save, and bless him. Did He promise more? He said: "Never again shall there be such a flood to destroy the earth."

God was anxious that Noah should remember and believe this promise, or covenant. So He said to Noah: "I do set the rainbow in the clouds. And I will look on the rainbow and remember My promise nevermore to send such a flood. When you see the bow, remember the promise."

Therefore, children, this promise is called the Rainbow Covenant.

God always remembers His promise to bless. *Gen. 8, 9.*

7. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

This is the story of Abraham, "the Friend of God."

Abraham was first called Abram, but God changed his name to Abraham.

Long after Noah, Abraham lived in Haran. He was rich in cattle and money. Sarah was his wife. The people of Haran prayed to the moon. Even Abraham's father did not know the true God.

You remember God had promised Adam and Eve a Saviour of the world? He was to come from Abraham's people. This was God's loving plan. Therefore God said: "Abraham, go out from thy country and people to the land that I will show thee. Through thee and thy children shall all the people of the earth be blessed." God wanted Abraham away from his ungodly relatives.

Abraham believed God, and went with all his family to Canaan. It must have been a wonderful sight to see this great prince, Abraham, ride into the land on a camel! Here in Canaan was to be born, some day, the Saviour of the world.

Abraham and Sarah were old. They had no son. "Will God never keep His promise and give us a child?" — so they may often have wondered when they sat in their tent. "Will God forget His covenant, His promise?"

One night God told Abraham to look up to the stars and count them, if he could. "So many shall thy children be," said God. "Abraham believed God," and this pleased God more than all else in Abraham.

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old and Sarah ninety, three angels came to their tent one day. And the Lord said to Abraham through the angels, "Before a year is gone Sarah will have a son." Sarah laughed. She thought she was too old to be a mother.

Listen! When Abraham was one hundred years old, he had the son. He called him Isaac. Ah, if we could have seen happy father Abraham and mother Sarah on that day! It was the gladdest day of their lives. *Gen. 12, 15, 16.*

8. SEPARATION OF ABRAHAM AND LOT.

After some time, Abraham's lambs and sheep, cows and camels became very, very many. It was hard to find pasture for them all. Lot, the young nephew of Abraham, also had large flocks. Sometimes when the shepherds of Abraham came to a cool spring of water, or a grassy meadow, Lot's shepherds came, too. So there were often quarrels about the grass and the water. "This spring is ours," Lot's shepherds would say. "No," said Abraham's servants, "it is ours."

Abraham heard of this. He loved peace. He was not selfish. So he took Lot with him on a high hill. Then he said to Lot: "Let there be no strife between me and you. If you wish to go to the right, I will go to the left. If you take the left, I will take the right."

Lot looked over the land. He chose the fine, rich land in the valley of the Jordan, around the city of Sodom. Abraham chose the stony hills of Canaan, at Mamre. There he built an altar to the Lord. But in Sodom were wicked people. Selfish Lot made a poor choice. No one can be happy with godless people.

Ah, and then the good God came to Abraham and cheered him. He said: "Lift up your eyes and look. All this land will I give you and your children for ever. I will make your children and children's children as many as the dust of the earth." *Gen. 13.*

9. SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

You remember the three visitors that came to Abraham.

When the three angels left Abraham's tent, he went with them a little way on toward Sodom. There Lot, his nephew, lived. As they walked, the angels told Abraham that God meant to destroy the wicked Sodom and Gomorrah.

Then Abraham, "Friend of God," began to pray with all his might for Sodom. He said, "If there be fifty righteous there, wilt Thou spare the city?" God said He would. Then Abraham went down from fifty to forty-five, from forty-five to forty, from forty to thirty, from thirty to twenty. Would God be patient once more? "If there be ten, wilt Thou spare the city?" And God promised. But there were not even ten righteous in Sodom.

It was evening. Lot sat in the gate of the city. Then the two angels came. Good news for Lot? No, no! "God means to destroy Sodom," they said. In the morning the angels hurried Lot on, and his wife, and his two daughters that they should flee from the city. "But do not look back to the city," said the angels.

Fire and brimstone soon rained from heaven over Sodom. Lot, with his wife and daughters, fled for their lives to the mountains. But Lot's wife loved Sodom. So she stopped once, only once, and looked back. And the fire and salt covered her! She became like a pillar of salty stone.

So wicked Sodom was burned to ashes.

God punishes sin. *Gen. 18, 19.*

10. ABRAHAM OFFERING UP ISAAC.

Of all things in the world Isaac was dearest to Abraham. But dearer than all the world to Abraham was the Lord God.

God wished to prove Abraham — to try his faith. God often does so with His friends. He said to Abraham: "Take thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and go into the land of Moriah. Offer him there for a burnt-offering." What? Offer, kill, burn Isaac? Were not all peoples to be blessed through Isaac? How it cut Abraham's heart to hear this! But he obeyed God.

He takes Isaac, servants, wood, knife. On the third day's journey they come to the mountain. He builds an altar, and puts wood on it. "Where is the lamb for the offering?" asks innocent little Isaac. "God will see to that," says Abraham.

Oh, and then the poor broken-hearted Abraham takes Isaac and binds him to the wood. He lifts his knife to kill him, when an angel cries out: "Abraham, Abraham, touch not the lad. For now I know that thou fearest God." Is father Abraham happy then? You can imagine! He quickly frees Isaac and presses him to his heart.

Instead of Isaac he offers a sheep that he sees in the bushes behind him.

So God tested Abraham's faith. Abraham was willing to offer — even Isaac!

Once more God told Abraham that in Isaac all peoples should be blessed. *Gen. 22.*

11. REBEKAH AT THE WELL.

Isaac's mother Sarah died when he was thirty-six years old.

Abraham thought it time for Isaac to marry. "Take not a wife of the wicked daughters of the land," said Abraham. He told his trusted servant Eliezer to go north to Isaac's uncle in Haran and find a bride for him.

Ah, pretty sight, when Eliezer starts out with ten camels loaded with presents. Can you see it?

One evening he stops outside of Haran at a well. Maidens are coming to draw water. Eliezer prays that he may find the one whom God has chosen to be Isaac's wife. Here comes a beautiful maiden. "Let me drink," says Eliezer. "Indeed," she answers, "I will give your camels water too." He asks her name. How happy he is to hear that she is Abraham's brother's grandchild, beautiful Rebekah. Isaac and Rebekah are cousins. But Isaac is older. God tells Eliezer that Rebekah is to be Isaac's wife.

Soon Eliezer is invited into the tent. He tells his errand and asks for Rebekah as a bride for Isaac. Her father at last says "yes." Rebekah, too. Now Eliezer gladly gives her the gifts sent by Abraham.

Rebekah must come at once to Isaac's land. The dear old servant can not wait till Isaac has his lovely wife!

Soon all are ready, Rebekah, her nurse, and ten camels.

Isaac is in the field praying at evening-time, when he sees camels coming. Isaac and Rebekah greet each other, and Rebekah becomes Isaac's wife.

Listen, it is said so prettily: "Isaac loved Rebekah!" *Gen. 24.*

12. ISAAC BLESSING JACOB.

Isaac and Rebekah had two sons, twins, Esau and Jacob. Esau was the first-born. He was red-haired and rough-skinned. Esau loved to roam in the woods and hunt. Jacob loved to stay at home with his mother Rebekah. Because Esau was the first-born he had the birthright. This means that when the father died he would be the head of the family and have twice as much money as his brother. It also meant that God's blessing and promise were to come through Esau and his children. You remember, do you not, the covenant with Abraham? Esau should have cared for the birthright, but he was careless. One day he sold his birthright to Jacob for a dish of food Jacob had made. It often happens that people sell their blessings for worthless things!

When Isaac was old and his eyes dim, he felt that he would soon die. He wished to bless Esau with the birthright blessing. I suppose he never knew that the boys had bought and sold the birthright years ago!

So Isaac told Esau to go and hunt a deer and make ready a good meal. Then all would eat and Isaac would bless Esau. Ah, Esau had no right to the blessing! But Rebekah loved Jacob. She wished Jacob to have the blessing. She told Jacob to go out and kill two kids, then take the skins of the kids and put them on his hands. Then the blind Isaac would think Jacob was Esau. How wrong of Rebekah! Jacob did as he was told. With the skins on his hands, he brought to Isaac the food his mother had made ready. "Come, let me feel," said Isaac, "if you are my son Esau. The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's." So Isaac ate the meat and blessed Jacob.

Now here comes Esau! When he finds that Jacob has received the blessing, he cries aloud and is broken-hearted. Too late! Isaac gives Esau only a little blessing. Esau grows angry and says, "I will kill Jacob!" But Rebekah quickly sends Jacob to his uncle far away.

Oh, the sorrow that comes of this lie of Rebekah and Jacob! But the blessing had to stay with Jacob. That was the way in those times. And God led all for the best. *Gen. 27.*

13. JACOB'S LADDER.

You can see Jacob, can you, traveling day after day, alone, on his way to his uncle Laban far away? Jacob often looks behind him; Esau might be coming!

The sun sets as he walks along tired. Night comes; darkness falls. Stars twinkle in the sky. Has Jacob a pillow to sleep on? No, only a hard stone. Is he lonely? Does he now feel sad that he stole the blessing? Perhaps he prays God to forgive him? I believe so. Soon Jacob is asleep on the ground. He has a wonderful dream to-night.

He dreamed, and look, a ladder set on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and, look, the angels of God going up and down. And, look, the Lord God stood above the ladder and said: "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and of Isaac. I will give this land to thee and to all thy children. And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Jacob awakens. "Oh," he says, "this is a holy place. This is the gate of heaven!" He takes the stone from under his head and raises it up. Then he calls the place Bethel, that is, The house of God. He prays. He promises God that if He will bring him safe again to Canaan, he will build God a house at Bethel.

On he walks, till he comes to the well Eliezer stopped at. There he meets — whom do you think? Beautiful cousin Rachel. *Gen. 28.*

14. JACOB RECONCILED WITH ESAU.

Rachel went to the well to water her father's flock. Just then Jacob came there. Politely he rolled the stone from the well and watered her flock. He told Rachel he was her cousin. And Jacob kissed Rachel. So happy was he to see her that he cried for joy. He loved her from the first. He longed to have her for his wife. She was very beautiful and had bright, sparkling eyes.

Uncle Laban heard of Jacob's coming. He ran to meet him, kissed him, and brought him in with a welcome.

Soon Jacob was tending Laban's flocks. After a month Laban wanted to pay Jacob. "No," said Jacob, "I will work seven years for Rachel." In those days a man had to pay the father of his bride. And he worked seven years for her. But on the wedding day Laban tricked him. He gave him her sister Leah, instead, because she was the older. She had tender, pale eyes. "Work seven more years, and you will have Rachel," said Laban. So Jacob did. Then he stayed six years more. His flocks grew. But Laban often changed his wages. Poor Jacob, he had to suffer much! What he had done to Esau came back to him.

After twenty years Jacob went home to his land with his wives, eleven sons, a daughter and much cattle. Esau met him and made up with him. Esau even forgave him all he had done in the past. They became friends.

Jacob had an exciting, hard, and often sad life. But God's loving-kindness helped him through. *Gen. 33.*

15. JOSEPH'S COAT OF MANY COLORS.

Rachel had two sons, Joseph and little Benjamin. Beautiful mother Rachel died just after Benjamin was born in Canaan.

Whom did Jacob love most of his twelve sons? You all know — Joseph.

He was now seventeen years old. His father showed that he loved him best. He gave him a pretty robe of many colors. Great princes wore such fine coats. Did Joseph dream of being a prince some day? It seems so. God meant to make him great. But his brothers were jealous of him. Joseph was a fine boy, kind, godly, and sensible. He was the best of all the twelve brothers.

Have you heard of his dreams? One night he dreamed that they were binding sheaves of grain in the field. And his sheaf arose and stood upright. And the sheaves of the brothers came and bowed down to his.

Another time his brothers teased him and said: "Well, what have you dreamed now, King Joseph?" "I dreamed that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to me," he answered. Even father Jacob thought that was too proud a dream! The brothers even hated him for the dream. No one of them understood that God meant to make Joseph a mighty prince.

When his brothers at one time did what was wrong, Joseph told his father. Then the brothers hated Joseph still more.

I wonder what will happen to this Joseph some day. *Gen. 37.*

16. JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

Sometimes Joseph's brothers took the sheep far away for green pastures, sometimes even fifty miles from home to the north. "Go and see if it is well with your brothers," said Jacob one day to Joseph.

So Joseph, who was only seventeen years old, started off all alone.

When the brothers saw Joseph coming, they said: "Ha, here comes the dreamer. Let us kill him, and see what will become of his dreams."

"No," Reuben begged, "put him down in that pit." Reuben kindly meant to go and pull him out. Can you hear Joseph begging his brothers not to throw him in? But they did.

Then the brothers sat down to eat.

What is this coming? Some rich men riding camels. They are on their way to Egypt to sell spices and sweet gums. They buy slaves, too. "We have a boy to sell you," cried the brothers. "What will you give us?" And the slave-buyers answered, "Twenty pieces of silver."

Can you believe it, the cruel brothers pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him! Oh, we can hear Joseph cry bitterly! But off go the slave-men away to Egypt.

Do you know what the brothers now did? They had kept Joseph's coat. So they killed a goat, dipped the coat in the blood and brought it to Jacob. They made him believe a wild animal had torn Joseph to pieces. How Jacob mourned. Yet there was no help. Joseph did not come back. *Gen. 37.*

17. JOSEPH SET OVER EGYPT.

A man called Potiphar bought Joseph in Egypt. Potiphar put Joseph over all his house. Potiphar's wife was not a good woman. She tried to make Joseph do wrong. Joseph answered, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" She grew angry, and Potiphar threw Joseph into prison.

Even there God was with Joseph. Two prisoners had dreams. Joseph told them what the dreams meant. Even the king of Egypt, Pharaoh, dreamed. No one could understand his dream. Then the king's butler, who had been in prison with Joseph, said, "There is a man in prison who can tell you." And the king sent for Joseph.

Pharaoh had dreamed that he stood by the river. Seven fat cows were feeding on the bank. But seven lean cows came and ate them up. He dreamed again: Seven full ears grew on one stalk, and seven thin ears ate them up. Said Joseph: "The seven fat cows and full ears are seven good years. The seven lean cows and thin ears are seven hard years. Now find a man that will gather grain and fill the barns full before the hard years come."

Whom do you think the king chose? Joseph. God was with Joseph.

And Pharaoh put his ring on Joseph's finger and a gold chain around his neck. The people bowed their knees when Joseph came riding in the king's chariot. Joseph gathered barns full of grain in the good years. He was thirty years old now. *Gen. 41.*

18. JOSEPH MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN.

Do you remember Joseph's dreams, when he was a boy? They had now come true.

He was next to the king. He gathered all grain in Egypt. Joseph's brothers had no food. They traveled the whole way to Egypt to buy grain. They came before Joseph, but they did not know him. He had changed so, looked so grand. He was very strict with them, too. They bowed their knees to Joseph. Do you remember his dreams?

After some time they came again to Egypt.

Hear this! At noon when the brothers came before Joseph the second time, they bowed to the floor. Joseph invited them to dinner. He placed them in order, according to their ages. To Benjamin he gave five times as much as to the others. This puzzled the brothers. Joseph could hardly keep from crying. After the meal the sacks were filled, and Joseph had his cup put in Benjamin's sack. When the brothers were on the way home, Joseph sent soldiers after them. He pretended they had stolen his cup. "In whose sack the cup is, he shall be my slave," said Joseph. It was found in Benjamin's sack. The brothers became pale with fright, for Jacob told them to be sure to bring Benjamin back home. Judah said, "Take me, let Benjamin go." Then Joseph understood that they were softer at heart than they had been when he was a child at home. "I am your brother Joseph," he said. Then they trembled. "Do not be sorry," said Joseph. "God has led me and you in all this." He embraced them and kissed them, especially Benjamin. "Go now, and bring father Jacob down," he said.

Oh, what joy when old Jacob saw Joseph again. "Now I am ready to die," said Jacob, "since I have seen your face, Joseph."

And they all cried for joy. The lost brother was found. *Gen. 45.*

19. THE FINDING OF MOSES.

Abraham is wonderful, — "He believed God."

Moses is wonderful, — "The Law came through Moses."

When Moses was a baby, a princess found him in the river Nile. Hear the story of Moses in the river!

Moses' father and mother lived in Egypt. They were people of the tribe of Levi, one of Jacob's sons. The Pharaohs of Egypt were good to the children of Israel while Joseph lived. When he died and was buried in Canaan, the Pharaohs made the people of Israel work like slaves. They were slaves. The Egyptians even killed the Hebrew baby boys.

Then Moses' mother thought: "They shall not get my pretty little boy!" She took a basket, covered it with tar to keep the water out, and put Moses in the basket. She hid it among the weeds in the river.

One day Pharaoh's daughter bathed in the Nile and she heard a baby crying. She looked, listened, — ah! there was something in the water. "Go, get that basket," she said to her maid. What? A beautiful baby boy in it!

By the river Moses' sister Miriam was keeping watch. She was very clever. She said: "I will get you a nurse for the baby." Whom do you think she got? — Moses' own mother! She nursed Moses in her home. When he was old enough to leave his nurse, she brought him to the palace. There Moses grew up. He was adopted as the princess' son. He went to school in the palace, like a prince.

God saved the babe in the river. God meant to make Moses a great man of God. *Ex. 2.*

20. MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH.

Forty years Moses was in Pharaoh's palace.

Then he fled to the desert. There he was a shepherd for forty years. He often slept at night on the bare ground, with his lambs and sheep.

But God had decided to call Moses as His first great messenger to men.

Will you hear the story of the burning bush?

While Moses is tending his sheep, he comes to a bush. Look, the bush burns! As Moses watches it, the bush keeps burning, but is not burnt up. "I will go and see what it is," says Moses.

A voice from the bush says, "Moses, Moses." "Here am I," Moses answers. Says the voice, "I am the God of your father, and of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Do not come near, for this is a holy place. I have seen the sorrow of my people Israel. I will send you to free my people." But Moses says, "Pharaoh will not hear me." God says, "I will make Pharaoh hear you." Then Moses says, "I am no speaker." God answers, "Never mind; Aaron, your brother, will speak for you." Then Moses obeyed and went.

God also showed Moses many wonderful signs. The people of Israel were glad that God had sent some one to free them. *Ex. 3.*

21. MOSES BEFORE PHARAOH.

Think of it, God's people Israel were slaves! What would Joseph and Jacob and Isaac and Abraham have thought, if they had lived then?

But God remembered His poor people.

One day He said to Moses: "Go and say to Pharaoh, 'Let my people go!'" Moses took Aaron, his brother, with him and went.

Here he stands before the great king. Pharaoh has a hard heart. God had told Moses he had, and that he would not let Israel go. To show Pharaoh how strong God is, Moses throws his staff, or walking stick, down on the ground. It becomes a serpent, or snake. Pharaoh pays no attention to it. He simply makes his heart harder against God. He thinks Moses' God can do nothing. Ah, he will learn to his surprise how mighty our God is!

So God sends ten plagues, or sufferings, upon Pharaoh and his people. The one plague is worse than the other. At last God commands His angel to go into every Egyptian home, even Pharaoh's home. The oldest son in every Egyptian home is to die. Oh! Pharaoh had not thought of that. After every one of the nine plagues Pharaoh hardened his heart. Will he do so when the last plague comes, too?

We shall see in the next story. *Ex. 7—11.*

22. THE PASSOVER.

The story of how the loving God saves His people Israel.

You remember, Pharaoh hardened his heart after each of the nine plagues. The tenth plague came. Every house was to lose its oldest son. The angel of death was to kill them, in the home of Pharaoh as well as in the beggar's home.

But God wanted to save His people Israel. He said to Moses: "Go to My people Israel. Tell every father to kill a lamb, one year old. Then sprinkle the blood of the lamb on the sides and top of the door of the house. When the angel of God comes at midnight, he will see the blood. Then he will pass over, pass by, that house." And all the people of Israel did so. They ate the meat of the lamb, too, in a family feast. That was the Passover feast.

Midnight came. Oh, hear the cries in the houses of the Egyptians! Even in Pharaoh's palace! Only the people of Israel, Moses' people, are spared.

Then Pharaoh sends for Moses, at night. "Take your people," he says, "and be gone!" And Moses obeys. What rejoicing there must have been among the children of Israel, when they left at midnight! That was the great Passover night.

They always celebrated Passover afterwards, just as we do Easter day.

God never forgets His people when they cry to Him for help.

Do you know whom the Passover lamb was to remind them of? Of Jesus, "the Lamb of God." *Ex. 12.*

23. MOSES AT THE RED SEA.

Moses led his people out of Egypt that Passover night and for days afterwards.

They had hardly gone when Pharaoh felt sorry that he had let them go.

What did Pharaoh do?

He sent soldiers after them. One day Moses' people saw Pharaoh's army coming. Why did Israel not run away? Oh! there were high mountains on each side; in front of them the waters of the Red Sea; behind, the soldiers of Pharaoh.

Then the people scolded Moses because he had led them out to die.

But Moses, trusting God, said: "Be not afraid. Stand still. You will see how the Lord can save you. You will nevermore see these Egyptian soldiers after to-day. The Lord will fight for you. You must only be quiet."

What! could Moses fight all Pharaoh's soldiers?

Oh, no! He prayed to God for help. Then God said: "Take the staff you took into Pharaoh's palace. Hold your staff out over the Red Sea. Then the waters will part. There will be a way opened through the sea. The people shall go across on dry ground."

And they did so.

When Pharaoh's soldiers saw that, they tried it, too.

Will they get over? No. On the other shore Moses lifts up his staff again. See, the waters roll back. The Egyptian soldiers are drowned.

Then Moses led the men in singing praise to God. And Miriam, Moses' sister, led the women in song. They sang: "I will sing to the Lord. This is my God, and I will praise Him." *Ex. 14.*

24. MOSES SMITING THE ROCK.

After the people left the Red Sea they had a long journey before them. It was often over hot sands. Almost no trees, only once in a while some, as at Elim. God gave them a new kind of bread, called Manna. One day they came to a place without wells. "Give us water that we may drink," they cried to Moses. Poor Moses, how many troubles he had. He was such a patient man of God.

Moses prayed to God, as he always did when he needed help.

God said, "Take your staff. Go to the Rock in Horeb. I will stand there before you. Then you shall strike the Rock. So water shall come out of it. Then the people may drink."

All the people stood and looked on when Moses struck the Rock.

Hear, the staff rings on the Rock! Out gushes the water in big streams. There is enough for all the people to drink. See, they come with bowls and water-pots! They are so very thirsty.

Ah, I wonder if they felt ashamed that they had grumbled against Moses and God? Do you know what they had said? "Is God with us, or not?" How could they say so? God had taken them from Egypt. He had led them through the Red Sea.

But we all so quickly forget God's goodness. *Ex. 17.*

25. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE GOLDEN CALF.

Oh, now comes a story worth listening to.

After three months the people of Israel came to a great mountain — Sinai.

You remember God's covenant, His promise to Noah?

And the covenant with Abraham?

Now God makes a new covenant with Israel, the covenant of the Law.

Come to the mountain. See these three millions of people gather there one morning. Moses and Joshua go up to the mountain. God speaks there to Moses. Clouds and smoke are all around the mountain. Lightning and thunder frighten the people till they tremble. Moses stays on the mountain for forty days and nights. God speaks with Moses "face to face." He shows Moses what Israel is to do to be God's true people. How Moses listens to every word!

Then on two tables, or tablets, of stone, God gives Moses ten *commandments*. This is one of the greatest gifts God ever gave men. It shows us what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do. That is what *commandment* means.

Then God said, "If you keep My commandments — do them — I will bless you." That was the covenant, or promise, He made this time.

Did Israel wait below in quiet prayer?

No, children, they were a wicked people! When Moses comes down from the mountain, he hears them sing and dance about a golden calf they have made. Just like the heathen Egyptians used to do. When Moses sees the calf, he becomes angry and breaks the two tables of stone against the rocks. But God afterwards gave him two other tables like the first.

Why did the people act so wickedly? Why not wait for God's covenant of the Law! But such are our hearts. We need God's forgiveness every day, and help to keep His commandments. *Ex. 19, 20, 32.*

26. THE TABERNACLE.

God's people always want a church. They love to go to church, to hear the Word of God, and to pray and praise God.

God wanted Israel to have a church in the desert.

In those times they called a church Tabernacle. It was really a beautiful tent. When Moses was on the mountain, God showed him how to make the Tabernacle, and what to put into it.

Come, let us look around and see what we find.

There is Mount Sinai. Here is a broad stretch of land. What is this fence, like a curtain hung on posts? That is the fence around the yard of the Tabernacle! Let us go into the yard, or court. What is that large altar over there in the middle? The Altar of Burnt-offering, where lambs are offered. And, look, that big bowl over there? The priests wash in it, before they go into the Tabernacle.

Ah, there is the Tabernacle, the beautiful large tent!

There are two rooms in it. The first room is the Holy Place. In it are a golden candlestick, or lampstand, an altar and a table with twelve loaves of showbread on it. Back of the Holy Place is the Holy of Holies. A veil, or curtain, is hung between the rooms. Only Aaron, the High Priest, can go into the Holy of Holies, and he only once a year. Then he takes blood of lambs and sprinkles it on the mercy-seat for the sins of the people. "Mercy-seat" — what is that? A lid on a large chest, covered with gold, and with two golden angels on top. That chest is called the Ark of the Covenant. Here God shows Himself and forgives the sins of the people. Under the mercy-seat are kept the two tables of the Law, for they are very precious.

Aaron and his sons are priests, or as we say, pastors.

When you go to church you say, "It is Sunday."

When Israel went to the Tabernacle, they said, "It is the Sabbath." The Sabbath day was not the same day as our Sunday.

The dear Lord loved to meet His people at the Tabernacle. *Ex. 40.*

27. THE TWELVE SPIES.

Whenever the people of Israel were to move to a new place they took the Tabernacle apart. Then they set it up again when they encamped. After a year at Mount Sinai they moved near to Canaan. "Soon we will be back in the lovely land of Abraham, our father," they thought. So they sent twelve spies into Canaan. The spies were to look about and see how the land was.

After forty days the spies came back.

What are they carrying on that long pole? A big cluster of grapes from Canaan. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, were brave men. They said to Israel, "The land is good. It is full of milk and honey. Let us go up at once and take it. So God has commanded. We can easily take it, for God is with us."

"Oh, no," said ten of the spies, who were cowards. "The people there are so big that we look like grasshoppers beside them." And they frightened Israel from going up. The people began to cry and complain all that night. Joshua and Caleb tried in vain to quiet them.

Then said God to Moses: "As I live, all of you that are twenty years old and over shall never come into the Promised Land except Joshua and Caleb. But your little children will I bring in. For forty years you shall wander around in this wilderness."

It happened just so.

God keeps His word. *Num. 13, 14.*

28. THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

In the desert there were many poisonous serpents. The people of Israel soon found that out.

You remember they had to travel back and forth, here and there, for forty years. So they grew tired. They complained against Moses and God. They said to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? There is no bread, no water, only this light Manna, and we are tired of Manna." Manna was a white, sweet flake, or scale, that God sent every morning to Israel for food.

Then God sent poisonous serpents that bit the people. They died in great numbers. Ah, then they confessed, "We have sinned against God, and against you, Moses. Pray to the Lord for us, that He take away the serpents."

Moses prayed. God said, "Make a serpent of brass and set it on a high pole. Then, when some one is bitten, let him look at the brazen serpent, and he will be well again. He will live."

Can you hear them crying when bitten, and then see them looking at the brazen serpent, so that they become well again?

But it was God's promise, not only the brazen serpent, that helped them.

God's word is mighty to help in all troubles. *Num. 21.*

29. JOSHUA CALLED AS LEADER.

One day God said to Moses, "Take Aaron, the High Priest, with you up on Mount Hor. Take off from Aaron his priestly clothes. Put them on Eleazar, his son. For Aaron will die on the mountain." Moses did so. Aaron died. Miriam, Moses' sister, had died just before. And all the people that were over twenty when they left Egypt had died in the desert. Exactly as God said, you remember?

Moses was one hundred and twenty years old. But his eyes were strong. His body was healthy. People lived quite long then. God knew that a young man was needed to lead Israel into Canaan. He must be a fighting general of his people, and a man of God.

Moses asked God to put some one in his place.

God said, "Take Joshua. Lay your hand on him. Let all the people obey Joshua. When he speaks, they shall come, or go." And Moses made Joshua the leader of Israel.

When Moses had preached a long farewell sermon to Israel, he went up on Mount Pisgah to look over into the Land of Canaan. Moses, too, had disobeyed God once in a matter, so he was not permitted to go into Canaan.

Then Moses died. God buried him. No one knows just where.

What a man of God was Moses, like the great Abraham! He was not proud. "God spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." (Ex. 33.) Oh, what honor and glory!

Moses is wonderful, — "The Law came through Moses." *Num. 27.*

30. CROSSING THE JORDAN.

What is this?

A procession of twelve white-robed priests carrying the golden Ark of the Covenant against the waves of the River Jordan.

Oh, no, not against the waves! Look, the waters above them pile up like a wall. The river has stopped running down stream.

Ah, and there stands Joshua, with his staff, saying to the people, "Come on, take your tents, goods, children, and all. For God is holding back the river until His people, the children of Israel, have gone over. The priests with the Ark will stand in the middle of the river, till all have crossed. Then they will also come, bearing the holy Ark of God."

So the people did. They walked with dry feet over the river-bed.

And where were they now?

In Canaan, the Promised Land, the land that God long ago promised to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

God never forgets His promises. Yet it was more than five hundred years since He gave this land to Abraham by promise.

On that day the people saw what a great Leader God had given them in Joshua. "They feared Joshua, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life." *Josh. 3.*

31. GIDEON AND THE TRUMPETS.

It did not take long before Israel forgot God's goodness. They prayed to idols, to false gods.

So God sent enemies against them. Some of them were called Midianites. Whenever the people cried to God to forgive them, He did. He even sent them helpers. These were called Judges, godly men that were good generals in war.

Gideon was a judge.

The people were suffering because the Midianites made war on them again.

One night Gideon took three hundred men, brave men! What did they take to fight with? Just imagine: trumpets, empty pitchers, or jars, and burning torches! But you see, God had promised He would frighten the enemies away just so.

The Midianites have gone into camp for the night. Quietly come Gideon and the three hundred. All of a sudden Gideon's men shout: "For the Lord and for Gideon!" Then they pull the burning torches from the pitchers and break the pitchers to pieces with a great crash.

Then what?

So frightened were the Midianites in the dark night that they even killed each other. The rest ran for their lives, and many were drowned in the river.

Once more God helped Israel out of much trouble.

If they only had remembered God's goodness, even then! *Judges 7.*

32. JOB'S AFFLICTION.

Have you heard of the great sufferer Job?

He lived somewhere in the wilderness near Canaan.

He was rich in cattle, sheep, and camels. He had seven sons and three daughters. All the neighbors bowed to the rich Job. All honored him. He was a good and godly man.

God tried his heart by many sufferings.

On a certain day, when he sat with his family, there came a servant and said: "Your oxen were plowing. Then wild men came and drove the oxen away and killed your servants. I only am left." While he spoke another came and told him that robber bands had taken Job's sheep and killed the shepherds. Worse still, while this one spoke, another came and said: "The lightning struck the house where your children were, and killed them." Patient Job answered: "The Lord gave. The Lord took. Blessed be His name."

Then fearful sickness fell on Job. But he was patient. One day his wife tempted him, saying, "Bid farewell to God. What is the use of serving God? He only brings you suffering." Then, then only, Job wished himself dead. He soon felt sorry, though. Job's friends tried to make him confess that he had done some one fearful sin. He had not, though he was a sinner, and knew that he was a sinner.

Job was patient.

Did God forget him?

Ah, He blessed Job for his patience. He gave him again seven sons and three lovely daughters, and blessed him with many cattle and great wealth.

God loves patient sufferers. *Job 1.*

33. THE BOY SAMUEL, SON OF HANNAH.

Hannah was a godly woman. One blessing she did not have — a son. So she prayed the Lord to give her one. God heard her prayer. She called the child Samuel.

While Samuel was a very small boy she put him in a school, that he might in time be a prophet. A prophet means a preacher of God's word. There had been for a long time no prophet in Israel. Eli, the high priest, was Samuel's teacher. Once a year Hannah came to Shiloh to visit Samuel. Each time she brought him a coat.

One night as Samuel slept in the Tabernacle, he heard a voice calling, "Samuel!" Then Samuel rose and went to Eli: "Did you call me?" "No," said Eli. Samuel lay down again. Once more he heard the call. He went to Eli again. The third time Eli said, "Go, lie down; and if He calls you, you shall say, Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." A fourth time God called. Then Samuel understood it was the Lord. He listened to the Lord's words. God told him what was to happen to Eli's wicked sons and to Eli himself.

God often talked with Samuel after that wonderful night. Samuel grew to be a mighty preacher and a godly man in Israel. He helped the people in wars. He was a true ruler of the people. In Samuel's time God's word was once more preached that the people might be saved. *I Sam. 3.*

34. SAUL CHOSEN KING.

"We want a king! We want a king, like all other nations!"

Who is crying so? The old men of Israel. They have come to Samuel, the Judge, to tell him that Israel wants to be like all peoples. They are tired of having God rule them by judges.

Samuel spoke earnestly to them. He said that if they had a king, they would have to build palaces, keep armies, and give the best they had to the king. But the people would not listen; they just wanted a king. So God said, "Give them a king. But tell them the truth."

Who was to be king?

A fine young man called Saul.

His father's asses were lost. Saul went to find them but could not. So Saul's servant said, "Come, let us go to Samuel, he can tell us where to find them."

Before they came, God told Samuel that Saul was the one to be king.

When Saul came, Samuel told him what the Lord had said. And Samuel made Saul king. Then Samuel called all the people together and showed them their king. And they gladly took him for their king. He was a grand, tall man.

"Long live the king!" shouted the people, till you could hear it all around.

And God "touched the hearts" of the people to love their king.

God always makes the best of everything. So He put His good spirit into Saul's heart, to be a good king.

I Sam. 8, 9, 10.

35. DAVID AND GOLIATH.

You all know David, the shepherd boy who became a great king and poet in Israel.

He wrote the twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Jesse was the father of David, and David was the youngest of eight sons. He had a lovely, ruddy face, and was a boy people were glad to meet. Above all else, he loved his Lord God with all his heart. God had made David brave. He could catch a lion by the mane and kill him. He was not afraid of the bear in the woods.

And Goliath, who was he?

A big giant, tall up to the ceiling. He was a soldier of the Philistines. The Philistines made war against Israel. No one dared to fight this giant, neither King Saul himself, nor any of his soldiers. David's three brothers, who were in the army of Saul, were also afraid of the giant.

One day David's father sent him to see how his brothers were. Just then the proud Goliath came out. He cried aloud, "Give me a man, that we may fight together." He even spoke against the God of David and Saul.

Then David said he would fight him. His brothers became angry, and scolded him. But David knew God was with him. So he went to the brook and took five smooth stones for his sling.

On comes Goliath. David goes out to meet him. Goliath is sure he can win. David is sure God will help him to win. He says to Goliath, *"I come against you in the name of the Lord."* Ah, watch. David puts a smooth stone in his sling. A quick swing, a good aim, and it hits Goliath in the forehead. Over he falls. Swiftly David runs up, takes Goliath's big sword, and cuts off the head of the giant. Then all the soldiers of Saul shout for joy. And all the Philistine soldiers run for their lives.

God's people Israel were saved from Goliath and the Philistines.

That day all the people sang songs of David and David's God. *I Sam. 17.*

36. JONATHAN LOVES DAVID.

David, the brave young man — shall we call him so?

King Saul liked David. And Saul's kind son Jonathan became David's best friend. Saul even took David to the palace to live. He would not let him go home to his father's house.

What, could the poor shepherd boy David go to live in the king's home? Could he wear his shepherd clothes? Jonathan took off his own robe, or coat, and gave it to David. Yes, even all his clothes, and his sword, his bow, and his girdle.

It must have looked fine to see David, the shepherd youth, and his friend, Prince Jonathan, walk arm in arm. Oh, Jonathan "loved David as his own soul." He made a covenant, or promise, with David. They would never forget each other. They would help each other in trouble.

How good of Jonathan, the king's son, to love the shepherd boy David so! Good friends make hearts happy. Good friends can help in need. You will soon see how David needs Jonathan's help.

Saul had heard the women singing,

> "Saul has killed his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands."

This made Saul jealous. So he envied David ever after. Then David needed the help of his true friend Jonathan. Best of all, Jonathan loved the Lord as did David, his friend. *I Sam. 18.*

37. DAVID PERSECUTED BY SAUL.

Saul might have been a great king if he had obeyed God. Once in a war he did not obey God. So his heart became unhappy. Then David used to play on his harp to soothe him. But Saul was still jealous of David. He tried to kill him. One day when David was sweetly playing his harp for Saul in the palace, the wicked spirit came over Saul, and twice he threw his spear at David. But David bent aside, so the spear did not touch him.

Jonathan, his friend, said to David that it was better for him to leave the palace. So David left.

Then Saul sent soldiers after David. He hunted him in the mountains.

One night David and his men had gone into a cave to sleep. Saul and his men also came in. They did not know David was there. Did David now take the life of Saul? No, he was kind. He remembered that Saul was king and spared him. At another time David with one of his men went into Saul's camp when all were asleep. David could easily have killed Saul. He did not, but he took Saul's spear and cup. Then he and his men went to a rock on the other side of the valley. From there David called so loud that Saul and his men awoke. David held up the spear and the cup. That melted Saul's heart. He said: "I have sinned; come back, my son David; for I will do you no harm." But David could not trust Saul, for the Spirit of God had left him. He was no longer the friend of God. Poor Saul, how unhappy he was! All they are unhappy that leave the Word of God.

At last Saul was killed in war, and David was made king in his stead.

Ah, children, the shepherd boy a king! *I Sam. 18, 24, 26.*

38. DAVID AND THE PROPHET NATHAN.

Of all the kings of Israel David was the most beloved.

How sweetly he played his harp, and sang psalms to the Lord! In the Tabernacle he led the priests in singing his beautiful psalms. David was a good king, too. He built great buildings and large cities. No one was as great in war as he. The people were happy in David's time. Even many of the poor could have their own homes, and "sit under their own fig-tree." He made his country great, and the people rich. The little shepherd boy was now a man and one of the mighty kings of the world.

Sometimes even great kings commit terrible sins.

David did.

It is a sad story to tell. But listen.

David once had a war. One of his generals was Uriah. The wife of Uriah was beautiful. David wanted her for a wife. So he sent Uriah out into the thickest of the fight to be killed. And Uriah was killed.

Did God see that?

God sees everything, even what kings do!

And God sent His earnest prophet Nathan to David. He told King David how awful his sin was.

Then David listened to God's word. He confessed his sin, and said, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan answered, "The Lord has forgiven your sin. You shall not die." So God in His love forgave David. But many, many troubles came to David after that. It would have been better if David had always obeyed his God. King Saul did not feel sorry before God when he sinned. King David did feel sorry. Therefore God could once more make David His friend.

After this David wrote another psalm in which he sang, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." *II Sam. 11, 12.*

39. KING SOLOMON'S DREAM.

David had many sons. Solomon was his favorite son. When David was old, he made his young son Solomon king in his stead.

Young king Solomon had a dream one night in his palace.

He dreamed that God said to him: "Ask what I shall give you."

I wonder what Solomon asked God for?

To be rich? No. To know many things? No. To live long? No.

What then? He asked God to give him a heart that could tell what was good and what was evil. He also asked God to make him a good king over Israel.

Yes, that pleased God. So God said, "Because you have asked for this, I will make you wise. But I will also give you riches and honor. There shall be no king like you, king Solomon. If you obey Me and keep My word, then I will give you a long life."

Solomon awoke. It was a dream.

Yet it made Solomon so happy that he went right up to the Tabernacle. There he offered sacrifices to God. He even made a big feast for all his servants.

The Bible says of him: "And Solomon loved the Lord."

If he had only done so all his life! Then he would have been far happier. *I Kings 3.*

40. SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE.

What a grand king Solomon was at first.

God gave him a wise heart. "A large heart," too, says the Bible.

And he was so rich that his palaces were full of gold. The plates on his table were of gold. His candlesticks were of gold. His throne was of gold. He lived in a wonderful palace.

Ah, the house in which Solomon lived was a palace; but the Tabernacle, the house where God dwelt, was only a tent.

So Solomon decided to build a large church, or temple, of stone and wood, very, very costly. It took him seven years to build it. Thousands of workmen came to help him. If we could have seen that temple!

When all was ready Solomon had a large festival, lasting for many days. The priests offered thousands of lambs and sheep. Then Solomon spoke to the people. When he had spoken to them, he went over to the large altar in the Court of the temple and stretched his hands toward heaven. And Solomon prayed, "O Lord God, protect this temple. And when Thy people pray to Thee here, then hear their prayer."

What did God answer to the prayer?

God said, "My eyes and my heart shall always be there."

"And the glory of the Lord filled the house."

Oh, how happy we are when God's eyes and heart are on our temples and churches! *I Kings 5.*

41. ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

When Solomon was dead, many wicked kings followed.

The most wicked of all was Ahab. He would not even have the true God worshipped in the temple. His wife Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord.

Then God sent Elijah, the great prophet, to king Ahab.

Elijah was not afraid of Ahab. He said straight out to him, "As the Lord lives, there shall be no dew and no rain these years, but according to my word."

And then swift as a bird he left. God sent him down to a brook, called Cherith. Why just there? Ah, you see, no rain fell. So all grass, all trees, and all farms dried up. There was nothing to eat. But by the brook were black ravens. You could hear their "Caw, caw, caw" everywhere. "The ravens brought bread and meat to Elijah in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening. And he drank of the brook."

When the brook at last ran dry, God sent Elijah far off to a poor widow. She had one little son. All she had to eat was some flour and oil.

Now what? God helped, as He always does. He made the flour and oil last just as long as Elijah was there. This was done "according to the Word of the Lord." There was plenty for the widow, her son, and Elijah! She had been almost starving to death before Elijah came. *I Kings 17.*

42. NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

In vineyards grapes grow.

Naboth had a fine vineyard next to King Ahab's palace. Ahab wanted that vineyard to put his garden plants in. He asked Naboth to sell him the vineyard. But Naboth would not, for he had this vineyard from his father.

Then Ahab grew displeased and sad.

Then the wicked queen Jezebel said, "Are you not king? Well, then, take the vineyard! Get some men to say that Naboth has sworn against God and you, the king. Then they will stone Naboth to death, and you can take the vineyard."

Sad to say, they did so! And the dogs licked the blood of Naboth.

Then comes Elijah, right into the vineyard. He meets Ahab face to face. He tells Ahab, "God says to you that He will punish you. And dogs shall lick thy blood in the same place where they licked the blood of Naboth. And the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." Did it come true? It always comes true when God says anything. Long afterwards Ahab was wounded in battle, and his blood was licked by dogs when Ahab's chariot was washed in that very spot.

Still later Jezebel was thrown out of the palace window and killed. And the dogs ate her. *I Kings 21.*

43. ELIJAH TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN.

Here stands Elijah by the river Jordan. Another prophet, Elisha, is with him. God has told Elijah that he is to be taken away to heaven this day.

Elisha had asked that he might be with him. First Elijah turned Elisha away, saying, "Stay here, I ask you. The Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha begs that he may go with Elijah. At Bethel Elijah says, "Stay here, I ask you. The Lord has sent me to the river Jordan." Elijah was not sure that Elisha could understand the wonderful thing that was to happen. What? Elijah's going up into heaven.

Now both men stand at the river Jordan.

Elijah takes his mantle, and strikes the water of the Jordan. The river divides; and Elisha and he walk across.

Elisha was sad that he was to lose his master Elijah. He says, "Give me double as much strength to be a prophet of God as you have."

Elijah answers, "If you see me, when I am taken away, you shall have it."

And while they walked together, and talked, look, "there came a chariot of fire, and horses of fire" that took Elijah away from Elisha. "And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

That was a beautiful scene.

Elisha, left alone, cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" And that meant what? It was just as if Elisha had said: "Oh, my father Elijah, you are gone! And you were such a strong help for us in Israel. Stronger than all war chariots and all soldiers in the war chariots."

For see, Elijah was very strong in prayer to God. *II Kings 2.*

44. ELISHA AND THE SHUNAMMITE.

A rich woman of Shunem made for Elisha a little room on the wall. When Elisha came to Shunem, he lived in that room. She was kind — the woman of Shunem. And she did this for Elisha, because he was a prophet of God.

So Elisha asked her, "What can be done for you?"

God is always good to them who are good to His friends.

She said she had all she needed. But Gehazi, Elisha's servant, told Elisha she had no son, and her husband was old. "Tell her to come in," said Elisha. When she was in the room, Elisha said, "In a short time, you will have a son." Like Sarah, you remember, she did not quite believe it.

But God gave her a son. Happy the Shunammite woman, then!

One day the boy went with the reapers. The day was warm and he took sick. "My head, my head!" he cried. He died in his mother's lap at noon. Oh, the tears she shed over her dead boy!

Then the Shunammite woman saddled her ass and rode at full speed to call Elisha. The prophet came to the Shunammite's house. He went up to the dead boy, who lay in Elisha's own little room.

Elisha shut the door. How he prayed to the Lord! And he lay down on the child, till the child grew warm. Then the boy sneezed seven times, and then he opened his eyes, and he was alive again.

"Take your son," said Elisha to the happy mother.

And she fell down on her knees and praised God.

I do not think she felt sorry that she had built Elisha a little chamber on the wall, do you? *II Kings 4.*

45. HEZEKIAH, THE SICK RULER.

A king sick? Ah, and a young king in his best years. After David the best of all the kings.

In comes Isaiah, the greatest of all the prophets.

"Set your house in order, for you shall die," says Isaiah. Then the sick Hezekiah turned to the wall and cried to God, "O Lord, remember now, I beg Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Isaiah the prophet had just left the palace. The Lord tells him to go back and say to the king, "I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. See, I will cure you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of God. And I will add to your life fifteen years." And Isaiah said: "Take a cake of figs." And they took it and laid it on the boil, and Hezekiah became well again.

God heard his prayer in love and goodness!

"How shall I know that I shall go to the temple in three days?" asked the king. Isaiah said, "This is the sign. The shadow on the dial shall go back or forward ten steps, either way, just as you say." And the king said, "Backward." The shadow went back. God heard Isaiah's prayer to make the king sure of God's promise. The king might have known that God would do what He promised. *II Kings 20.*

46. JONAH PREACHING.

Have you ever heard of Jonah?

God said to him, "Go and tell the people in Nineveh to turn away from their sins and to turn to Me." But Jonah did not want to go to far-off Nineveh. He took a boat instead and went in the other direction to get away from the Lord.

Then God sent a storm.

The people on the boat were heathen. They thought that the storm had come because of some wicked person aboard. If they could find that person, and throw him into the water, then the storm would quiet down, they thought. So they said, "Let us cast lots, and see who it is." And the lot fell on Jonah.

So they threw Jonah into the sea.

But God sent a large fish that swallowed Jonah. And Jonah was alive in the fish three days and nights. Then the fish threw up Jonah on the shore.

Now Jonah obeyed.

He went straight to Nineveh and preached. "Only forty days more, and Nineveh shall be destroyed."

And all the people, even the king, "cried to the Lord" to forgive their sins. God heard them, and He spared the city. It was a very large city, full of people. *Jonah 1—3.*

47. THE KING BURNS THE SCROLL OF JEREMIAH.

King Jehoiakim did not love the Word of God.

In those times they wrote the Bible books on scrolls, like rolls of paper.

God said to the prophet Jeremiah, "Take a roll of a book and write in it all I have spoken to you about Israel, from the beginning. All I have said I will do to wicked Israel." Baruch, the writer, wrote while Jeremiah spoke.

Jeremiah told Baruch to go into the temple and read it to the people, that they might repent in time. When the king heard of the book he said, "Go and fetch the roll." And they read all to the king, the princes standing by, listening.

It was a cold day. There was a warm fire in the brazier on the floor.

The words of the Lord angered the king. He took some parts of the roll and cut them with his knife and threw them into the fire. Oh, the king was not afraid of God's words!

Then the Lord said, "Jeremiah, write those words again." He did write. "And he added besides those words, many like them." In this new roll God said He would punish the king and his people. The king of Babylon would come and take the king of Israel and the land.

The poor heart of Jeremiah — how it ached for his people! How often he wept and cried to God because his people would not repent! *Jer. 36.*

48. THE THREE MEN IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

When the king of Babylon came to Israel, he carried away the young man Daniel, too.

Daniel loved God with all his heart.

The king right soon began to favor Daniel. He gave him riches. He even put him over a part of his land, like a judge.

Daniel had three friends who also came to Babylon. What big names they had: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! Can you say them? The king was pleased with these three young men. This made some of the king's men jealous. They said one day: "We will crush Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We will ask the king to make an image of gold. All must then fall down and pray to it. If any one does not, he shall be thrown into a red-hot furnace."

And the king commanded it.

But the three young men prayed to their Lord, as before.

This made the king fearfully angry. He ordered the furnace to be made seven times as hot. The three men were thrown in their clothes into the furnace.

Did they burn up?

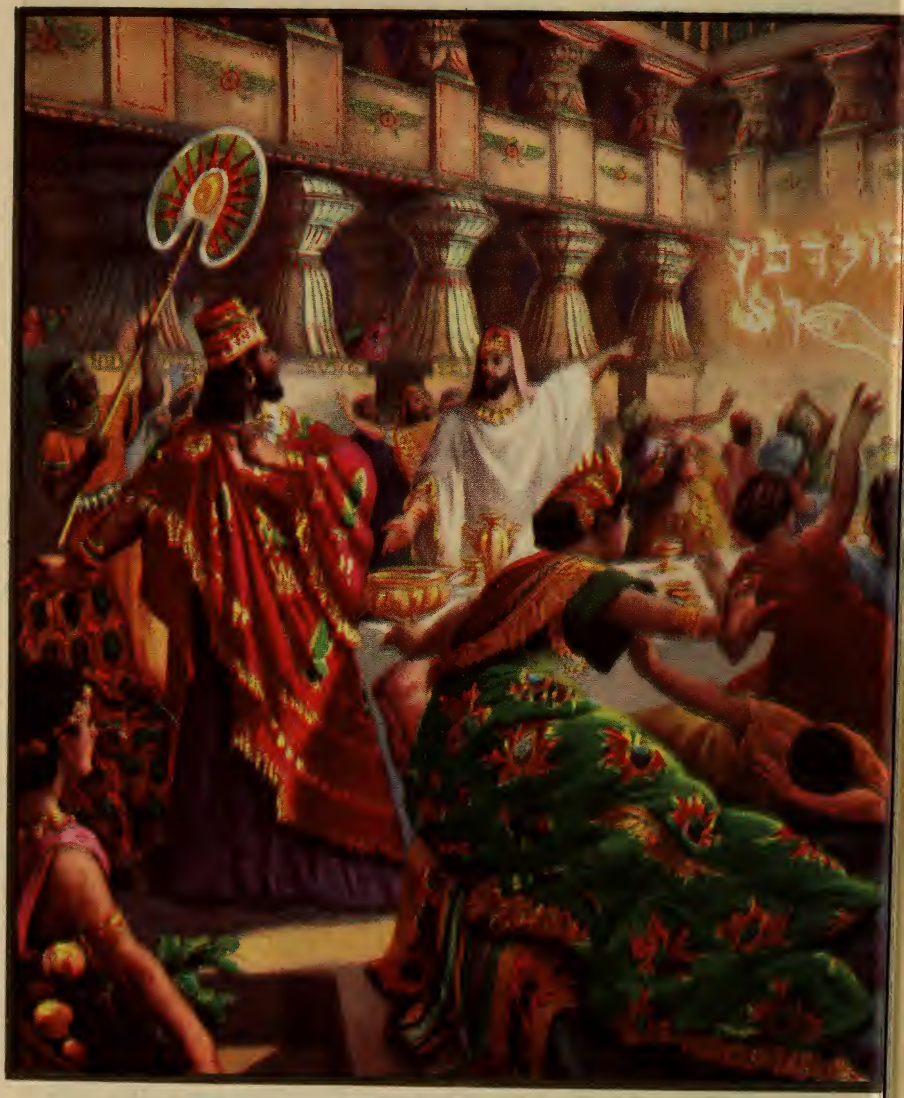
Hear this: The king goes to the furnace — what? "Did we not throw *three* men into the furnace," the king said, and "look, I see four men loose, walking in the middle of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the looks of the *fourth* man is like a son of the gods!" And the king went and called to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come up. And not a hair of their head was singed, nor their clothes at all burned.

Who was that fourth one?

Ah, the good Angel of God!

Then king Nebuchadnezzar said: "I command that all must now worship the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Because there is no other god that can save like this."

What a beautiful story! *Dan. 3.*



49. BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

Another king of Babylon was Belshazzar.

He made a great feast for his thousand lords.

They drank wine from the gold and silver vessels that had been taken from the Temple of Jerusalem. Holy vessels of God, you understand. Only the priests of God in Israel were allowed to use them.

Look, what is that? A light on the wall as from heaven! What is it?

A hand is writing words on the wall!

What are those words? No one could read them or understand them.

The king called out, "Bring in the king's wise men that understand dreams, bring them quickly." They came. But none of them understood the words. The queen said, "O king, there is a man named Daniel who is holy, and wise from the gods. He can explain the words."

And they sent for Daniel.

See him stand there in the great palace. He looks at the writing on the wall. Then he turns to the king, saying, "O king, the words on the wall are these: 'Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin': God has weighed you on His scales and found you wanting. You are not the kind of king he wants. Your kingdom is to be taken from you and given to the Medes and Persians."

That very night Belshazzar was killed in his palace. Oh, the cries in the great city of Babylon, when the enemy came and burned and killed, just like they always do in war!

But Daniel became a great governor under the new Persian king. *Dan. 5.*

50. DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.

Daniel was now placed above all other men, except King Darius himself.

Said the jealous great men, "We shall never find anything against Daniel. If only we could find fault with the way he worships God!"

So they made a wicked plan. They asked the king to command that for thirty days no one should pray to any one but to the king. Pray to a king, instead of to God! — The king so commanded.

But Daniel kept the windows of his house open toward Jerusalem and prayed to the true God. He did so three times each day.

When the king heard it, he was greatly displeased. He did not wish to have his friend Daniel hurt. Yet, a king's word could not be changed. And they threw Daniel into the lions' den. But the king stood above and cheered Daniel, saying, "Your God that you serve always will save you."

That night the king could not sleep. He could not even listen to music.

Early in the morning he went to the den.

"I wonder if the lions have eaten him up," the king thought.

And he cried to Daniel in a sad voice, "Has your God been able to save you?" And Daniel answered, "My God sent His angel. He shut the lions' mouths. They have not hurt me."

The king was glad. He told his servants to take Daniel out of the den. He now ordered Daniel's enemies thrown into the den. Hardly had they reached the bottom when the hungry lions leaped upon them and "broke all their bones to pieces."

Once more the king commanded all to pray to Daniel's God. "For," said the king, "He is the living God." *Dan. 6.*

51. MORDECAI HONORED.

There was once a king in Persia called Ahasuerus.

He took a beautiful Jewish orphan girl, Esther, for his wife. She had been brought up by an older cousin, named Mordecai.

Queen Esther loved her people, the Jews, also called "the people of Israel." When some of the Jews went back to Jerusalem, many stayed in Babylon and Persia.

Once Mordecai saved the king's life.

Among the king's great men was one called Haman. He was proud. All had to bow to him. But Mordecai would not do so. He knew Haman was not a good man. When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow to him, he grew angry. He sent word that all Jews should be killed. Think of it!

One night the king could not sleep. He read in the books that told of happenings in his kingdom. Then he read of the man that had saved his life. "Oh," thought the king, "and I gave him no reward!"

He asked Haman, "What shall be done to a man whom the king wants to honor?" Haman thought he meant him. So he told the king to give him costly clothing and a crown and the king's horse to ride upon. Then the king said to Haman, "Do all these things to Mordecai." This made Haman afraid.

One day there was a feast at the queen's palace. Just as they were eating, the king said, "Ask anything of me that you wish for, Queen Esther." He loved the queen. She begged the king to spare her people's lives and her own. "There is one here who would kill us," she said. "Who is he?" asked the king. Then Esther pointed to Haman. At once the king told the servants to hang Haman. But to Mordecai he gave fine robes, and a ring for his finger, and he made him one of his great men.

Esther had saved the lives of her people. *Esther 6, 7.*

52. NEHEMIAH REPAIRS THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

To Jerusalem!

Home again, after seventy years in Babylon!

I can hear them sing home-coming songs, can you?

Home to the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! God led Israel home.

But nothing was left of Jerusalem, except ruins, as after an awful fire. Weeds grew in its streets, and screech-owls flew about the ruined houses.

What shall the people do now?

Ezra, the good priest, teaches them the Law and the Word of God. He helps them build up the temple again. It was only a small temple they built this time. The old folks that had seen the old temple wept when they saw this little one. But the "great God" lived there just as He lived in the Tabernacle of Moses and in the Temple of Solomon. God is wherever His Word is.

Nehemiah next becomes governor of Jerusalem. He leads the people in building up strong walls with towers, all around the city. Every one works willingly. All give their money gladly. It is dear old Jerusalem they are building up again! Lovely homes are made for the families, and gardens around them. Soon children play and sing songs in the streets, as in old times.

Were the people more godly now? Yes, for a little time. But soon they forgot God. So he sent prophets, preachers, to them. The last prophet was Malachi. "Oh," said some of them that loved the Lord, "let us pray together for our people. And, oh, that God would soon send His great Saviour to us and all peoples!"

When will that Saviour come? *Neh. 4.*

PARTS

OF THE

CATECHISM

AND

PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father, who art in heaven;
Hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil;
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

THE BENEDICTION.

The Lord bless us and keep us;
The Lord make His face shine upon us, and be gracious unto us;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon us, and give us peace.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The First Commandment.

I am the Lord thy God.
Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

The Second Commandment.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain.

The Third Commandment.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

The Fourth Commandment.

Honor thy father and thy mother,
that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

THE CREED.

The First Article.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

The Second Article.

I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell;
the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

The Third Article.

I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints;
the Forgiveness of sins;
the Resurrection of the body; and the Life everlasting. Amen.

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS.

Morning.

Now I wake and see the light,
'Tis God has kept me through the night;
To Him I lift my voice and pray,
That He would keep me through this day. Amen.

Lord, I thank Thee for the night,
And the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the day so fair.
Help me, Lord, to love Thee more
Than I ever loved before;
In my work and in my play
Be Thou with me through the day. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father, thanks be to Thee for rest this night and for good angels' loving care. Keep me, Thy little child, from all sin and evil. Praise be to Thee for my baptism, when I became Thy dear child. Bless mamma, papa, ..., and all in the world, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Evening.

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take. Amen.

Father, unto Thee I pray,
Thou hast guarded me all day;
Safe I am while in Thy sight,
Safely let me sleep to-night.
Bless my friends, the whole world bless,
Keep me ever in Thy sight. Amen.

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;
Bless Thy little lamb to-night;
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light.

All this day Thy hand has led me,
And I thank Thee for Thy care;
Thou hast clothed me, warmed, and fed me,
Listen to my evening prayer.

May my sins be all forgiven;
Bless the friends I love so well:
Take me, Lord, at last to heaven,
Happy there with Thee to dwell. Amen.

God protect me in this night
By beloved angels bright.
And make me, through Jesus' blood,
Pure from sins, kind, loving, good.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.

BLESSING AND THANKSGIVING AT TABLE.

BEFORE MEAT.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our Guest,
And let Thy gifts to us be blest. Amen.

Lord God, our Heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts which we receive from Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season; Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. Amen.

After Meat.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever. Amen.

We give Thee thanks, O God our Father, for all Thy benefits, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who, with Thee, liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Amen.

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